

answer questions about the strengths or weaknesses of a party's position at a hearing, litigation strategy, or similar matters.

(d) *Role of the office of the Chief Counsel.* Under no circumstances will the office of the Chief Counsel of FDA directly provide advice about a hearing to any person who is participating or may participate in the hearing. In every hearing, certain attorneys in the office are designated to represent the center or centers whose action is the subject of the hearing. Other members of the office, including ordinarily the Chief Counsel, are designated to advise the Commissioner on a final decision in the matter. It is not compatible with these functions, nor would it be professionally responsible, for the attorneys in the office of the Chief Counsel also to advise other participants in a hearing, or for any attorney who may be called on to advise the Commissioner to respond to inquiries from other participants in the hearing, for such participants may be urging views contrary to those of the center involved or to what may ultimately be the final conclusions of the Commissioner. Accordingly, members of the office of the Chief Counsel, other than the attorneys responsible for representing the center whose action is the subject of the hearing, will not answer questions about the hearing from any participant or potential participant.

(e) *Communication between participants and attorneys.* Participants in a hearing may communicate with the attorneys responsible for representing the center whose action is the subject of the hearing, in the same way that they may communicate with counsel for any other party in interest about the presentation of matters at the hearing. It would be inappropriate to bar discussion of such matters as stipulations of fact, joint presentation of witnesses, or possible settlement of hearing issues. Members of the public, including participants at hearings, are advised, however, that all such communications, including those by telephone, will be recorded in memoranda that can be filed

with the Division of Dockets Management.

[44 FR 22329, Apr. 13, 1979, as amended at 50 FR 8994, Mar. 6, 1985; 54 FR 9035, Mar. 3, 1989; 58 FR 17096, Apr. 1, 1993]

### Subpart D—Presiding Officer

#### § 12.60 Presiding officer.

The presiding officer in a hearing will be the Commissioner, a member of the Commissioner's office to whom the responsibility for the matter involved has been delegated, or an administrative law judge qualified under 5 U.S.C. 3105.

#### § 12.62 Commencement of functions.

The functions of the presiding officer begin upon designation and end upon the filing of the initial decision.

#### § 12.70 Authority of presiding officer.

The presiding officer has all powers necessary to conduct a fair, expeditious, and orderly hearing, including the power to—

(a) Specify and change the date, time, and place of oral hearings and conferences;

(b) Establish the procedures for use in developing evidentiary facts, including the procedures in § 12.92(b) and to rule on the need for oral testimony and cross-examination under § 12.87(b);

(c) Prepare statements of the areas of factual disagreement among the participants;

(d) Hold conferences to settle, simplify, or determine the issues in a hearing or to consider other matters that may expedite the hearing;

(e) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(f) Control the course of the hearing and the conduct of the participants;

(g) Examine witnesses and strike their testimony if they fail to respond fully to proper questions;

(h) Rule on, admit, exclude, or limit evidence;

(i) Set the time for filing pleadings;

(j) Rule on motions and other procedural matters;

(k) Rule on motions for summary decision under § 12.93;

(l) Conduct the hearing in stages if the number of parties is large or the issues are numerous and complex;

## **§ 12.75**

(m) Waive, suspend, or modify any rule in this subpart under §10.19 if the presiding officer determines that no party will be prejudiced, the ends of justice will be served, and the action is in accordance with law;

(n) Strike the participation of any person under §12.45(e) or exclude any person from the hearing under §12.90, or take other reasonable disciplinary action; and

(o) Take any action for the fair, expeditious, and orderly conduct of the hearing.

### **§ 12.75 Disqualification of presiding officer.**

(a) A participant may request the presiding officer to disqualify himself/herself and withdraw from the proceeding. The ruling on any such request may be appealed in accordance with §12.97(b).

(b) A presiding officer who is aware of grounds for disqualification shall withdraw from the proceeding.

### **§ 12.78 Unavailability of presiding officer.**

(a) If the presiding officer is unable to act for any reason, the Commissioner will assign the powers and duties to another presiding officer. The substitution will not affect the hearing, except as the new presiding officer may order.

(b) Any motion based on the substitution must be made within 10 days.

## **Subpart E—Hearing Procedures**

### **§ 12.80 Filing and service of submissions.**

(a) Submissions, including pleadings in a hearing, are to be filed with the Division of Dockets Management under §10.20 except that only two copies need be filed. To determine compliance with filing deadlines in a hearing, a submission is considered submitted on the date it is actually received by the Division of Dockets Management. When this part allows a response to a submission and prescribes a period of time for the filing of the response, an additional 3 days are allowed for the filing of the response if the submission is served by mail.

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(b) The person making a submission shall serve copies of it on the other participants. Submissions of documentary data and information are not required to be served on each participant, but any accompanying transmittal letter, pleading, summary, statement of position, certification under paragraph (d) of this section, or similar document must be served on each participant.

(c) Service is accomplished by mailing a submission to the address shown in the notice of participation or by personal delivery.

(d) All submissions are to be accompanied by a certificate of service, or a statement that service is not required.

(e) No written submission or other portion of the administrative record may be held in confidence, except as provided in §12.105.

### **§ 12.82 Petition to participate in forma pauperis.**

(a) A participant who believes that compliance with the filing and service requirements of this section constitutes an unreasonable financial burden may submit to the Commissioner a petition to participate in forma pauperis.

(b) The petition will be in the form specified in §10.30 except that the heading will be “Request to Participate in Forma Pauperis, Docket No. \_\_\_\_.” Filing and service requirements for the petition are described in paragraph (c) of this section, whether or not the petition is granted. The petition must demonstrate that either: (1) The person is indigent and a strong public interest justifies participation, or (2) the person’s participation is in the public interest because it can be considered of primary benefit to the general public.

(c) The Commissioner may grant or deny the petition. If the petition is granted, the participant need file only one copy of each submission with the Division of Dockets Management. The Division of Dockets Management will make sufficient additional copies for the administrative record, and serve a copy on each other participant.

### **§ 12.83 Advisory opinions.**

Before or during a hearing, a person may, under §10.85, request the Commissioner for an advisory opinion on